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ABSTRACT

This workshop module is designed to train teachers to use fantasy techniques as a means of strengthening their students' nonsexist behaviors. Workshop activities include a discussion on the rationale for using daydreams to modify behavior and attitudes and the exploration of the experience of a guided daydream. Guidelines are provided for teachers using daydream techniques with their students. A brief background reading on psychocybernetics is presented. A booklet is included for teachers to use in leading classroom activities for their students. Different types of daydreams and their distinctive advantages are presented for the classroom activities. (JD)

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Module #13

Developing the Components of a Nonsexist Person through Guided Daydreams

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TEACHER SKILL GUIDE FOR COMBATTING SEXISM

Module #13

Developing the Components of a Nonsexist Person through Guided Daydreams

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MODULE #13: DEVELOPING THE COMPONENTS OF A NONSEXIST PERSON THROUGH GUIDED DAYDREAMS

OBJECTIVE

*To train teachers to use fantasy techniques as a means of strengthening their students' nonsexist behaviors

SUGGESTED TIMING

	Activity	Suggested Time
I.	Introduction and rationale	10 minutes
II.	Experiencing a short guided daydream	35 minutes
III.	Applying daydream techniques in the classroom	10 minutes

WORKSHOP DESIGN

Activity I. Introduction and rationale

Objectives

*To present an introduction to this workshop

*To present a rationale for this workshop

A. To the leader:

1. Present a lecture, such as the following, explaining the use of guided daydreams:

"Guided daydream techniques can be a powerful educational and therapeutic approach to help build internal support systems. Essentially, through the use of planned daydream sessions, we can help our students build up imaginary reserves of dealing successfully with a variety of situations in nonsexist, flexible ways. The feelings of success that are generated during such daydreams can form a strong base of internal support which students then carry with them itno real-life settings.

"Every situation we encounter from day to day requires some type of response from us -- both cognitive (we have a variety of thoughts and feelings about everything we do) and physiological (our bodies react to our thoughts and feelings, so that nervousness may cause our palms to perspire, while intense fear may cause us literally to quake). Over time, as we encounter lots of similar types of situations, we begin to build up patterns of associations. Eventually, we begin to react to a situation almost automatically. In fact, we even anticipate our reactions to certain situations. For example, a student who has built up a pattern of negative associations with math exams will have negative thoughts and feelings even before entering class on the day of another exam.

"Suppose we want to change the way we react to a given situation. This is not always easy to do, because such changes require that we break down our old patterns of associations, cognitive and physiological. Sometimes, the breaking down of old patterns can occur naturally, through a series of unusual experiences that lead us to build up new and different associations with familiar types of situations. However, if we don't want to rely on such an unpredictable natural process, we can work directly on building new patterns of association via guided daydreams.

"Fantasy sessions guide us through imaginary situations during which we control the outcomes: if we imagine situations in which we are successful, we begin to build up positive patterns of associations with such situations. For example, in therapy there is a process called desensitization, which involves overcoming fears (negative patterns of association) by gradually imagining that the object of fear can be approached without any bad consequences. Eventually, the confidence that is built up during imaginary situations can be transferred into real-life situation.

"In this same way, we can help our students build up positive patterns of association in relation to the sometimes difficult task of living in a nonstereotypic way. By allowing students to experience day dream successes with their nonsexist thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, we will be helping them build their internal support systems, so they can more easily transfer their imagined successes to real-life settings."

Activity II. Experiencing a short guided daydream

Objective

*To experience the power of guided daydreams

A. Ask participants to locate themselves in the room so that they can relax and be comfortable for a guided daydream activity.

B. Guided daydream, sample script

1. Present a lecture, such as the following:

"I'd like you to take this opportunity to allow yourself to become relaxed. Find the parts of your body that are tense and systematically relax them. Take some deep slow breaths and feel the tenseness leave your body. Find the tight muscles in your body; tense them, and then slowly release them. Move to another tense area: tighten the muscles, slowly release them.

"I'd like you to imagine that you have been given three free credits to a nearby college in return for supervising a student teacher this semester. You don't need any credits for teaching certification, and you say to yourself, 'This is my chance to take something I've always wanted to take!'

"It's registration day. You and a colleague who also has free credits are at the college. You are aware of the fact that your colleague does not share your open attitudes. You read over the course selection list and a course that is regarded as the exclusive domain of the opposite sex strongly attracts your interest. Imagine what that course would be for you.

"You tell your colleague that you'd like to take this course. This person laughs derisively and labels you with a derogatory word. Your first reaction is to back off but you say to yourself, 'Wait a minute, I really want to learn about this.' Hear yourself saying that to yourself.

"You turn to your colleague and calmly say, 'The day when this course was restricted to the opposite sex is gone forever, I'm glad to say, and you're showing your ignorance when you call me that name.' Hear yourself saying that to the other person.

"You feel yourself fill up with good feelings. You're aware of feeling strong, up front, and successful. Get into those feelings for a few seconds.

"I'm going to ask you to leave the daydream now. Slowly let the scene fade away and when you're ready, come back to us in this room."

C. Large group discussion of new insights and feelings resulting from experience of guided daydream.

Activity III. Applying daydream techniques in the classroom

Objective

*To make teachers aware of important guidelines when using daydream techniques with students

A. Enumerate in a brief lecture to participants the following basic points that they need to remember.
   1. Guided daydream is a technique that can be very successful in the classroom as a vehicle for building internal imagery in which students see themselves as successfully using nonsexist component behaviors.
   2. All guided daydreams should begin with a series of relaxation exercises so that students' thoughts are not distracted by body cues.
   3. If daydreams are used carefully, students will respond to their internal imagery fully; their bodies will not be able to tell the difference between reactions to imagined situations and real-life situations.

B. It may be helpful to begin work in the classroom by doing a series of short daydream exercises so that participants get used to the technique. See Classroom Activities Booklet for suggestions.

BACKGROUND READING

PSYCHOCYBERNETICS*

"Creative imagination" is not something reserved for the poets, the philosophers, the inventors. It enters into our every act. For imagination sets the goal "Picture" which our automatic mechanism works on. We act, or fail to act, not because of "will," as is so commonly believed, but because of imagination.

A human being always acts and feels and performs in accordance with what he/she imagines to be true about himself/herself and his/her environment.

This is a basic and fundamental law of mind. It is the way we are built.

When we see this law of mind graphically and dramatically demonstrated in a hypnotized subject, we are prone to think that there is something occult or supra-normal at work. Actually, what we are witnessing is the normal operating processes of the human brain and nervous system.

For example, if a good hypnotic subject is told that he/she is at the North Pole he/she will not only shiver and appear to be cold, his/her body will react just as if he/she were cold and goose pimples will develop. The same phenomena has been demonstrated on wide awake college students by asking them to imagine that one hand is immersed in ice water. Thermometer readings show that the temperature does drop in the "treated" hand. Tell a hypnotized subject that your finger is a red hot poker and he/she will not only grimace with pain at your touch, but his/her cardiovascular and lymphatic systems will react just as if your finger were red hot poker and produce inflammation and perhaps a blister on the skin. When college students, wide awake, have been told to imagine that a spot on their foreheads was hot, temperature readings have shown an actual increase in skin temperature.

Your nervous system cannot tell the difference between an imagined experience and a "real" experience. In either case, it reacts automatically to information which you give to it from your forebrain.

Your nervous system reacts appropriately to what "you" think or imagine to be true.

Truth Determines Action and Behavior

The human brain and nervous system are engineered to react automatically and appropriately to the problems and challenges in the environment. For example, a man does not need to stop and think that self-survival requires that he run if he meets a grizzly bear on a trail. He does not need to decide to become afraid. The fear response is both automatic and appropriate. First, it makes him want to flee. The fear them triggers bodily mechanisms which "soup up" his muscles so that he can run faster than he has every run before.

*Excerpts from Maxwell Maltz, M.D., Psychocybernetics, Pocket Books, 1974, pp. 31-32, 33-34. Reprinted with permission.

His heart beat is quickened. Adrenalin, a powerful muscle stimulant is poured into the bloodstream. All bodily functions not necessary to running are shut down. The stomach stops working and all available blood is sent to the muscles. Breathing is much faster and the oxygen supply to the muscles is increased manifold.

All this, of course, is nothing new. Most of us learned it in high school. What we have not been so quick to realize, however, is that the brain and nervous system which reacts automatically to environment is the same brain and nervous system which tells us what the environment is. The reactions of the man meeting the bear are commonly thought of as due to "emotion" rather than to ideas. Yet, it was an idea--information received from the outside world, and evaluated by the forebrain--which sparked the so-called "emotional reactions." Thus, it was basically idea or belief which was the true causative agent, rather than emotion--which came as a result. In short, the man on the trail reacted to what he thought, or believed or imagined the environment to be. The "messages" brought to us from the environment consist of nerve impluses from the various sense organs. These nerve impulses are decoded, interpreted and evaluated in the brain and made known to us in the form of ideas or mental images. In the final analysis it is these mental images that we react to.

You act, and feel, not according to what things are really like, but according to the image your mind holds of what they are like. You have certain mental images of yourself, your world, and the people around you, and you behave as though these images were the truth, the reality, rather than the things they represent.

Let us suppose, for example, that the man on the trail had not met a real bear, but a movie actor dressed in a bear costume. If he thought and imagined the actor to be a bear, his emotional nervous reactions would have been exactly the same. Or let us suppose he met a large shaggy dog, which his fear-ridden imagination mistook for a bear. Again, he would react automatically to what he believed to be true concerning himself and his environment.

It follows that if our ideas and mental images concerning ourselves are distorted or unrealistic, then our reaction to our environment will likewise be inappropriate.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: A BOOKLET FOR PARTICIPANTS
TO USE WITH THEIR STUDENTS

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SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENT:

Select or develop at least one guided daydream experience based on a nonsexist component behavior you consider important to your students.

OVERVIEW

"Success daydream" is a mental imagery technique that encourages students to visualize themselves as successfully demonstrating nonsexist behavior. This, in turn, will increase the probability that students will exhibit such behavior in real-life situations.

On the following pages are different types of daydreams, illustrations of the various types, ways for generating daydream material, ways to continue your work on identification with role models through daydream, and some general guidelines for making your daydreams work. You, the teacher, will have to pick and choose, adapt and experiment, until you find what works best with your students.

SECTION I. TYPES OF DAYDREAMS

A. Guided daydreams

1. Type One: a daydream rich in success experiences without specific classroom follow-up

You, as teacher, may wish your students to exhibit specific components of nonsexist behavior. Use a guided daydream to reach this goal. Choose the component to highlight, set the scene, select the persons who enter and leave the daydream, formulate the dialogue, and choose the way to conclude the daydream successfully. As teacher, load the guided daydream with one or more success experiences and emphasize the good feelings that come as a result of the experiences.

The following is an example of a guided daydream where a teacher works with Component #1 of the nonsexist person--alertness to sex bias in self, others, media, society at large. You, as teacher, can use this fantasy technique to provide your students with a backlog of successful experiences in nonsexist behavior. Hopefully, your students in coming days so that they can report on their real-life awarenesses.

You might use such a sequence as the following:

"Find a comfortable position and let yourself relax. Close your eyes and take a series of deep breaths, exhaling slowly. (Pause a moment for students to relax.) It's early morning. You get out of bed and go to the window. Smell the fresh air and notice the green grass and the slight wind blowing through the bushes and trees. As you look outside, you notice three cars go by. In each car, there are two persons, a man and a woman. Yet, in each case, the man is driving. You think to yourself, 'I bet the women can drive as well as the men.' You leave the window and begin to get dressed, but you don't forget what you've just seen. You finish dressing, eat breakfast, and begin your walk to school. On the way, you notice two young children. A little girl is holding a doll; a small boy asks to hold it. You hear the little girl tell him that boys don't play with dolls. You're surprised to hear this, but you continue walking. Although you don't like what you've heard, you begin to smile as you realize how alert you've become to signs of sex bias around you.

"You're in school now. You're reading a book. As you look at the pictures, you notice that almost all of the women are pictured in the kitchen, while the men are pictured in work situations. You think to yourself, 'That's not right. Women make up almost 50% of the work force.' As you complete that thought, you realize that this is the third time today that you've noticed something like this. You're feeling very aware, very alert. You know that your ability to spot sex bias is sharpening. Tell your closest friend what you've noticed about yourself and hear your friend congratulate you on your powers of observation. (*You could stop here with a closing sentence or, if your students are really into fantasy, you could go on. At first, however, keep your fantasies brief.)

"It's now 12:00 and time for lunch. On the way to the cafeteria, you notice that all the people who are hired to make repairs in the building are men and all the people who are hired to prepare food are women. Once again, you say to yourself, 'I noticed everything around here' and it feels good to say that to yourself.

"At 1:00 PM, you go to the auditorium for a movie on oil production. While watching the movie, you notice that all the secretaries are female and all their executive bosses are male. Wow! Nothing slips by you. You really are alert.

"School is out. On the way home you stop at a fair that has come to your community for a short time. You stop by one of the booths and notice that they award different prizes to males and females. Winning males receive binoculars; winning females receive a comb and mirror set. A red alert buzzer seems to go off in your brain. Once again, you noticed evidence of sex bias.

"Finally you're home. At last you can relax. You flick on the TV and sit down to watch your favorite show. Now, for the first time, you realize that the only people who cry on this show are women. A sense of accomplishment sweeps over you. You realize that you see things that other people don't notice. In your fantasy, find someone to tell about this day and everything you've noticed. When you're done, open your eyes and come back to this room."

2. Type Two: a daydream rich in success experiences with specific classroom follow-up

If as teacher you wish to prepare students to exhibit nonsexist behavior during a specific experience, you can first lead them through a guided daydream in which they see themselves behaving successfully.

So, for example, if you wish to set up a debate in the classroom and want students to express a wide range of feelings (Component #5) during the actual, real-life debate, you might first lead them on a guided daydream where they can practice nonsexist behaviors and experience success feelings around them. The following guided daydream, for example, would precede a real in-classroom debate:

"Relax. Take deep breaths. In a few minutes, you will be taking part in a debate. You have strong feelings about the position you have taken and you are determined to get your ideas across clearly and forcefully.

"See yourself sitting down at the table where the debate will take place. Feel how energized you are. You really are determined. You are breathing deeply and your body and mind are alert and ready.

"You have ten minutes before the debate begins. You take the ten minutes to go over your notes and collect your thoughts. You decide which points you want to make; you decide which facts will help you make your points; you decide what your opening statement will be. You feel the excitement and you wish the debate would begin.

"At last! The debate begins. The opposing team makes their opening arguments. Now it is your chance to speak. Your voice comes out loud, clear, and steady. You feel very pleased as you hear your strong voice project itself across the table. You are saying everything you had planned to say and you are saying it well. You pause and look around. Notice how others are giving you their total attention. They are learning forward to catch every word you say. You are delighted with yourself and a smile spreads across your face. You finish speaking now. You can sit back, relax a bit and listen to others. But from time to time, you find that there is more you want to say, so you speak up. You are more and more sure of yourself; the feelings of pride in yourself grow. You feel glad that you took the time to prepare, that you seized the opportunity to speak up, and that you had the courage to continue to assert yourself.

"In your fantasy, find a way to end your debate and when you are finished, come back to this room. When you open your eyes, you will have ten minutes to prepare your thoughts and ideas for the upcoming debate."

B. Open-ended daydreams

1. An open-ended daydream allows students to enrich their daydream with visual images from their own experiences. So, for example, if you were trying to increase Component #1 behaviors (alert to sex bias), you could make the daydream open ended by saying:

"You open the book and notice several examples of sex bias. What do you notice? (pause) What else do you notice? (pause) How do you react when you notice them? (pause) What do you want to say or do? (pause) Now you go out to the fairground. Again, you notice evidence of sex bias. What, specifically, do you notice? (pause)" And so on.

2. Some open-ended daydreams leave the total ending of the daydream for the student to finish. Below is an example of such an open-ended, unfinished daydream based on Component #3 (confronts sex bias):

"Relax. Take some deep breaths. It's Saturday morning and you know you have to get dressed quickly. This afternoon is your friend's birthday party and you haven't bought his present yet. You rush downtown and go to the toy department. The sales clerk approaches you and asks to be of help. The clerk finds out that you are looking for a gift for your (?) year old male friend and suggests a toy tank, a model airplane, a miniature bazooka gun, or a rocketship. You offer thanks for the suggestions, but you say, 'I don't think my friend would like any of those things. He's into art. Perhaps some water-colors or a book of famous artists.' The sales clerk looks upset and says, 'I think you'd be making a mistake; those things are popular with girls.'

"Decide on your own how to finish the daydream. What, if anything, would you say to the sales clerk? What, if anything, would you purchase? When you complete the daydream open your eyes, and come back to this room."

3. To process this unfinished open-ended daydream, ask your students some questions.
   a. Ask students to share in the total group or with a partner how they ended the daydream. Ask students which ending best typifies Component #3 behaviors. If you wish, ask students to role play different endings and then to decide on which endings typify Component #3 behaviors.
   b. Ask students to write down on slips of paper, what they really would have done if faced with this situation in real life. Keep the papers anonymous. Collect papers. Talk about the gap (if any) between the way people should behave in a situation, and how they typically do behave.
   c. Then, as a class, make a large list of all the ways that a person with Component #3 behavior might have handled the situation with the sales clerk. When the list is completed, ask each student to choose one behavior to try out in her or his daydream and then repeat the daydream, allowing students the opportunity to see themselves behaving toward the sales clerk with Component #3 behaviors.

SECTION II: ADDITIONAL AIDS FOR USING THE DAYDREAM TECHNIQUE

A. Bridging success daydream to identification with role models.

Success daydream images can help students strengthen their process of identification with a role model, or with some specific characteristic or quality they admire in a role model.

1. Identification with a role model

Ask students to think of a situation they are going to face in which they wish they could be like their role model. For example, if their role model is Margaret Mead and the are going to face college interviews, you might construct a variation on the following:

"Relax. Take deep breaths. See yourself prepare and get dressed for your college interview. Remember the careful thought Margaret Mead gave to preparing for her adventures? What might she do to prepare for college interview? See yourself taking the same care as she would. (Long pause) Now you're at the interviewer's door. Remember the excitement and feelings of anticipation Margaret Mead had as she met new and strange people. Remember how she greeted them, warmly and with enthusiasm. How would she greet your interviewer? What might she do? What might she say? See yourself behaving as Margaret Mead would. (Long pause)

"Margaret Mead, when she thought about staying in a new place, always had many questions; she was assertive, curious, and frequently skeptical. What questions would she have for the college interviewer about the college? About housing? About the people? About the courses? What questions do you ask? In what ways do you assert yourself? Is there anything else Margaret Mead would have done during this interview? If so, you do it, too. (Long pause) When your daydream is over, open your eyes and share your daydream with a partner."

2. Identification with a specific characteristic that is admired in a role model

Ask students what they find most desirable, admirable, etc., about their role models. Then, construct a daydream around that quality. The daydream is written so that students can see themselves successfully exhibiting that quality. For example:

"Relax. Take deep breaths. The thing many of you admired about your role models was their ability to assert themselves. In this day dream, I want you to see yourselves becoming the more assertive person you want to be. See yourself out on the playground. Someone tries to take something from you. See yourself responding assertively. What do you say? What do you do? Congratulate yourself on any signs of assertion.

"Now, you're in the lunch room and someone tries to push ahead of you in the line. Respond assertively. What do you say and do? Take a minute to feel proud of yourself for your assertiveness.

"Now see yourself in the classroom. A teacher has walked in and asked for boys to help take down the gym decorations. When a girl volunteers, the teacher ignores her. Feel how unfair this is and decide to assert yourself. What do you say or do? Enjoy well-earned feelings of success for having the courage to speak up in this difficult situation.

"Is there another situation that only you know about in which you would like to assert yourself? Perhaps you want to say 'no' to someone? Perhaps you have a request of someone? Perhaps you want to ask someone to change his ro her behavior? Perhaps you want to express a negative feeling or a positive feeling? Perhaps you want to respond to a criticism that you feel you didn't deserve? Think of some situation in which you want to assert yourself. Set the scene in your own mind. Plan what you want to say and how you want to say it, and in the daydream, do it. When you're finished, come out of the daydream and turn to a partner to share what happened."

B. Generating daydream material.

What do you include in a daydream? There are several options:

1. As teacher, you can decide what component you value for your students, what component you want them to understand better and exhibit more often. Then you create the daydream.
2. Ask your students which component they would like you to construct a daydream around. Take it as homework and come back the next day with a daydream that fulfills their request.
3. Ask your students to supply you with additional information for you to incorporate into the daydream. If, for example, you're a teacher of young students and you want to know what situations are meaningful to them concerning Component #2 (treats males and females with equal respect), you might ask them:
   a. When aren't people fair to boys? Girls?
   b. How do people treat boys and girls differently? Is it fair?
   c. How do you wish people would treat boys and girls?
   d. Describe someone you know who treats boys and girls equally and fairly. Make up a person who treats boys and girls fairly. What would that person do?
   e. If you were a ten-year-old person who treats boys and girls with equal respect, what would you do?

Then, find a way to use their language, their situations, and their beliefs, in the daydream that you create.

4. Older students can write daydreams for themselves or for each other. Once they understand the daydream technique, let students choose a component they would like to see themselves exhibiting successfully. With a partner, they can talk about the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of a person who successfully exhibits the component. Then, partners write daydreams for each other and lead each other through them.

C. Guidelines for running a daydream

1. Relax your students. You might say something like:

"Find a place that is comfortable, and close your eyes. Focus on your scalp. Feel any tension that is there. Relax your scalp. Focus on your forehead. Tense it up, relax it. Eyes: tense them up, then relax them. Ears, mouth, chin, neck, back, shoulders, arms, elbows, wrists, hands, fingers (each time instructing to tense the muscles and then relax the muscles in that area). Feel the tense energy flow out of your fingers. Feel the tension in your ribs, stomach, legs, knees, ankles. Relax and tense each part, leaving it as relaxed as you can get it. Tense up your toes; now relax them. Tense up your toes again; now let all the energy flow out through the toes. Breath in, breath out slowly."

2. Set the scene.
3. Spin out a detailed, concrete success experience.
4. Give guidelines that help students really feel success feelings, think constructive thoughts, and notice their nonsexist behaviors.
5. Retreat from the situation in the daydream and bring students' minds back to the present time and place.

D. Processing your students' experiences with success daydreams

As the teacher, you will frequently want to know if your students are enjoying daydreams, finding them easy to follow, or facing difficulties with them. You need this information so that you can revise the daydreams to make them work and then discuss with your students the problems, causes, and possible solutions in a nonthreatening way.

Possible process questions:

1. How clearly could you see yourself in the daydream?
2. How easy was it for you to have success feelings?
3. What things made the daydream hard or easy for you today?